

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Hartland M. S., Paulpietersburg,
Natal, So. Africa, March 27, 1933

Dear Folk in the Homeland,

I am surprised when I start reckoning out the time to find how long it is since I last wrote to you. I do not believe that I have written since we were in Hibberdene, the first of the year. Since that time I have held meetings in the following places; Entungwini one Sunday, three days in Filimon's section, Ngotshe District, twice at Altona, once at Badaza, Swaziland, once at Mbucu's twice at our new outpost at Moleman, and once in Jostina's section, besides the Quarterly meeting here this month and two "Big Sundays" at Hartland. I am not going to try to report all these meetings in this letter, but say, that on the whole we have found things very encouraging in all of these outposts visited. Since the beginning of the year I have baptized over twenty, and admitted them to church membership.

Our experiences have been varied, we had to be drawn out of Wit-river with donkeys, but came out none the worse for the experience. Another time I came to the Pongolo when it was full, and saw that the only thing for me to do was to strip off the most of my clothing, tie them to the saddle and walk through the water. With a lusty Zulu holding my hand, even with the water breast high, these rocky rivers can be crossed in flood. Imagine my surprise when I reached the other side, to see the boy whom I had left to lead my horse across mount him and attempt to ride him through the river. We eagerly watched for we knew the danger that was before him. He got along nicely till he came to the middle of the stream, when with a sudden plunge the horse went under carrying his rider with him. The horse made several frantic efforts to regain his footing, resulting in the boy dragging saddle, clothes and all beneath the horse. It was only with the greatest difficulty that they were rescued. Next time, "Mnyaka" (my boy) will follow instructions, and wait for some one to help him across. Fortunately for me my extra pair of trousers had been landed safe by the first party to cross. While the Pongolo is very dangerous at times, and many natives drowned in it every summer, we have a fairly good guide there at our crossing which enables us to tell the depth of the water. Two large rocks which in ordinary times are three or four feet above water, and if they are still visible, it is safe enough with a good man, to cross, but you must walk through on your feet for a horse cannot carry you over this treacherous stretch of rocks and boulders.

These river crossings have their amusing as well as difficult phases. For example, another day, when I was forced to take this method of crossing this same river, I stripped to nothing but a shirt and pair of trousers, before entering, my extra clothing being sent over on horse back, but reaching the other side found a whole crowd of women and girls hanging around, and had to wait a long time before I had a chance to change my wet clothing. These Natives are not modest enough to give a person a chance to dress.

The last of these experiences was crossing the Pevaan a few weeks ago, when again I had to wade a swollen river. I had some of my clothes tied around my neck, and was getting along nobly, till almost at the other side, I suddenly lost my balance, lunged forward and wet even those around my neck. However we arrived safely at our destination about nine o'clock that night. On the way we had to take refuge from a storm and that delayed us so we had to travel at night. The worst experience I had was when

we had nearly reached the summit of the mountain my horse fell down on top of me, and the only thing that saved me was the big rocks, which enabled me to crawl from beneath my horse and we both got off without a scratch. I am not trying to magnify our difficulties, but just giving you a few of the instances that go with our river crossings and mountain riding and serve to add a bit of spice for one never knows what one may encounter.

At Filimon's we had exceptionally good meetings, worth all the hill climbing and river crossing. One woman gave herself to seek the Lord, and altogether the meetings were very profitable.

Now that the winter season is opening I do not expect to be home very much. We hope to go to Bethal and Ermelo very soon, and to carry on special meetings at as many of the outposts as possible during the winter months. I hope also to write to the Highway more often, but time will tell as to my success in this.

Yours in Him,

D. M. MacDONALD

Hartland M. S., Paulpietersburg

Natal, So. Africa. March 27, 1933.

Dear Homeland Friends,

The Lord has been very good to us in so many beautiful ways and we have so much to praise Him for, it is good to think of a whole eternity in which to "catch up" for we get so far behind here on earth.

One of the things which sets our heart singing is a letter from Paulina brought to us by Jostina who has been visiting this, our newest out-post. Perhaps you would like to read it, so I will translate it for you.

"Princess"—(the title they still give me, for they say I came back to my Father's home and they still feel I am their sister.)
Friends,

I praise God for the return of my husband, still alive, that his soul did not go out (Philip came to the Quarterly, and was taken very sick. Aloni and Jostina took him home with them and cared for him till he was strong enough for the return journey).

When he came back to me I thanked God and I also thank my kind friends. I also praise him for the coming of these friends. On Sunday we held the funeral of that woman: her name was "Nukwase". She died nicely. She had a perfect witness (to sins forgiven). The people troubled us saying for us to baptize her but we told them we had not that power, but if she were ready she would go to Heaven. She sang a hymn and took her "ticket" (given to her when she gave herself to seek God), placed it near to her and died. On Sunday we buried her. We were greatly blessed.

On Thursday we went to pray for a sick man. He and his wife both gave themselves to seek God). They request tickets, they greatly desire them. I have many places to go where they are asking for prayer. Pray that I may have the strength.

Good-bye.

"Paulina Lukele"

Jostina says the death bed of this woman was very beautiful. A large number, both heathen and Christian were present at the funeral which was so happy and blessed it was more like a revival service.

She was with Paulina on Thursday as well and says this is a heathen man and wife who have given themselves. She says this poor man was sick and almost dead, he begged to have Christians called to pray for him but none would

come—now at last he hears of a church who do pray for the sick and sends word to Philip. So happy was he, when he found they really did come that he wants a "ticket" right away so he can be counted among their number at least as a seeker.

These "tickets" are simply certificates either of membership or of candidature for baptism, and help to hold the interest of these simple child-like people, helping them in attendance and loyalty.

Paulina and Philip are neither one very strong and with her home cares and two tiny children she finds it very hard to get away. There are (as she writes) so many calls for prayer and visiting; their need for strength is very real. But through her girlhood of delicate health God marvelously used and blessed her and He is doing so today. I have seen, many times, the service which is rendered in difficulty and pain—which costs in blood and tears—is the service which bears fruit. Souls are won through the weak and the handicapped far more than through the strong and the free.

Let us unite in prayer for the hungry seeking souls in this "new" district of Moolman.

Yours for souls, won from Africa's night,

FAITH MacDONALD

Altona M. S., P. O. Berbice,

Via Piet Retief, Transvaal So. Af.

March 27, 1933.

Dear Homeland Friends:

I must take time to send a few lines from us and to let you know how things are going in this little corner of His vineyard.

It is such a beautiful day—really too glorious to describe, but as I look out upon these wonderful hills and valleys (now brown and burned from drought and grass fires) and the marvelous beauty of the sky, I can truly say with the Psalmist, "Praise the Lord O my soul: and let all that is within me, bless His Holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all His benefits etc." What a beautiful Psalm it is and how it touches all our life. As I read it today it seems so full of sweetness and has enriched my soul greatly and my strength has been renewed so that I do feel that "my soul is on the wing". How gracious and loving the dear Lord is, and how we should praise for all He does for us!

We have been having a time of much physical weakness and weariness and though we gratefully feel the autumn tinge in the mornings and evenings, the days have been very hot indeed and our strength greatly diminished—but "He knoweth our frame" praise His name! And Saturday sent such a decided coolness in the atmosphere we now feel greatly refreshed. Yesterday was a wonderfully cool day and showery; today though clearing we still are enjoying much coolness and we trust the real hot weather is past for this year.

Though it promised to be such a bountiful year, the drought came upon us during the last of January and in February, and we look upon fields of corn that are withered and barren. Pumpkins and melons are not to be seen hardly and though some of the food has been saved by the belated rain which did come in February, there is a great loss of food this year. The natives seem quite resigned, but it is a great disappointment indeed. We trust it may draw some hearts to God.

Last Sunday was Communion day and we had both Mr. and Mrs. MacDonald with us for the first time since June 1929. We had a full house and a beautiful service with a good altar service at the close and we trust that some souls